

2 April 1993

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington DC

Dear President Clinton,

On the eve of President Mubarak's meeting with you, we seek your good offices for an end to serious violations of human rights in Egypt.

It is a fact that not for a single day since taking office in 1981, has President Mubarak ruled Egypt without recourse to emergency laws, special courts and an iron-fist policy. During his presidency, tens of thousands of people have been arrested, held in prisons incommunicado, denied access to lawyers (and family) and subjected to severe physical and mental torture. Those acquitted by the courts are routinely re-arrested immediately and thrown back into prison.

The continuously worsening situation with regard to human rights has been documented by such organisations as Amnesty International, the US Department of State's Human Rights section and Middle East Watch. For example, in May 1989, Amnesty International published a report under the title: 'Egypt, Arbitrary Detentions and Torture Under Emergency Laws', in October 1991 'Egypt: Ten Years of Torture', and in January 1992 'Egypt, Security Police Detentions Undermine the Rule of Law'.

Mr President, an ever-hardening policy of suppression in modern times has invariably proved to be counter-productive and has strengthened the people's determination to strive with greater vigour for their inalienable right to the rule of law, democracy and the respect for human rights. This is what is happening in Egypt today. For example, the Egyptian authorities have recently had to deploy a heavily armed force of 12,000 to suppress the people of one district (Imbabah) alone.

The situation is deteriorating alarmingly and many are now gravely concerned that President Mubarak's policy of repression will result in a major tragedy which would destabilise not only Egypt but the entire region. It is our belief that only respect for human rights, the rule of law and a widening of the democratic process in Egypt can avert this and we appeal to you to take up this whole issue with President Mubarak during your meeting with him.
With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam (Secretary General)

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 4, 1993

Mr. Hatem Azzam
Secretary General, Islamic Council
16 Grosvenor Crescent
London, United Kingdom SW1X7EP

Dear Mr. Azzam:

Thank you for your letter of April 2 to President Clinton regarding human rights in Egypt. Concern for human rights is an integral part of American foreign policy. Our mission in Egypt monitors human rights very closely, and the State Department has described human rights problems in Egypt at length in its annual Human Rights Report to the Congress. We have also raised our concerns directly with Egypt's leaders, including President Mubarak during his April visit to the United States.

Egypt has a variety of human rights problems, ranging from attacks by extremists on Egyptian government officials, Egyptian Christians and foreign tourists, to various Egyptian government restrictions and violations of civil and political rights. The United States government considers all of these to be human rights abuses, and we have forthrightly described them in our annual Human Rights Report. You will be happy to know that President Clinton is strongly interested in promoting human rights in Egypt and world wide.

The President appreciates your support for our human rights efforts toward Egypt, and I hope our response has addressed your concerns.

Sincerely,

Theodore Feifer

Theodore Feifer
Deputy Director
Office of Egyptian Affairs